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ABSTRACT

This book presents excerpts from a large collection of student journals which were submitted to an English professor over a 15-year period. The diaries, many of which were read aloud and anonymously in class, offer a unique glimpse into the personal world of students' lives. The journals demonstrate many of the themes that students write about and these personal narratives raise crucial issues regarding the rewards and risks of introspective classroom diary writing. Most of the chapters here examine subjects that students addressed every semester, and include: problems children experience with divorced parents; the alarming number of college women suffering from eating disorders; how students cope with the devastating loss of relatives and friends who have killed themselves; and sexual activity which men and women reveal or conceal. The final chapter explores how diary writing intensifies the student-teacher relationship and stimulates personal growth and discovery in the classroom. It is believed that by writing weekly diaries and by hearing a few of these entries read aloud, students are often able to experience personal breakthroughs. (RJM)

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